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STATE FOR EUR/AGAS -- SAINT-ANDRE

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNFA](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [CU](#) [AU](#)
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO AUSTRIA ON NAM SUMMIT

REF: STATE 145242

Classified By: Economic-Political Counselor Gregory E. Phillips. Reason: 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (SBU) EconPolCouns delivered reftel demarche on September 8 to Andreas Melan, the Austrian MFA's DAS-level Latin America Director. Melan confirmed that Austria will attend the September 11-16 NAM meeting in Havana in the character of "guests." The chief Austrian representative will be Peter Jankowitch, a retired diplomat and "elder statesman" whose last post was as Austrian Ambassador to the OECD in 1987. Georg Lennkh, a more recently retired diplomat who last served as the MFA's development director, will also attend. During Austria's EU presidency in the first half of 2006, Lennkh came back to work in the MFA's Africa Bureau. (He is the elder brother of MFA Americas Director Rudolf Lennkh.)

2. (C) In our discussion, Melan expressed basic agreement with our positions. He noted, however, that as a guest, Austria would not participate in the formulation of NAM positions. He acknowledged our position that Austria could play a moderating role on the margins of the meeting.

3. (C) On democracy, Melan noted that, as EU president, Austria had tried to craft a stronger position on national day celebrations in Havana. He said Austria had managed to get 24 of the 25 EU members to support a policy of holding two national day celebrations in close succession -- one for "official" Cubans and one for dissidents. However, they had not been able to win consensus on this or on any fallback position. During the Austrian presidency, EU members had chosen not to hold national day celebrations, a stance which, according to Melan, had irked the Cuban government anyway. Since July, some countries had indeed held celebrations. Melan said Austria had not yet decided whether or not to hold a celebration on October 26.

4. (C) Melan said there continued to be a strident debate in the EU on how best to ensure a transition to democracy in Cuba after Fidel Castro's demise. He said it was a matter of general acceptance that the model the Cubans were now profiling -- transfer of authority to Raul Castro and to other key figures -- would be a first step in the transition. At that point, however, consensus broke down in the EU. Eastern European countries, holding in mind the revolutions of 1989, touted the role of peaceful popular demonstrations as part of a successful transition scenario. However, Spain looked to its own idiosyncratic transition to democracy. After the death of Francisco Franco in 1975, the role of head of state passed, as Franco had arranged it, to Juan Carlos de Borbon, who became king. It was Juan Carlos, the designated heir, who played such a crucial role in the establishment and maintenance (in 1979) of democracy. In all of this (at least according to Melan) Spain saw a model for Cuba: democratic transition could conceivably come from within the system. The close emotional relationship (from the Spanish

perspective) between Spain and Cuba, the crown jewel in its
19th century empire, made it hard to hold a discussion of the
point, Melan said.
McCaw